



# Preparing for a Career in the Health Sciences

Big Sky High School will introduce a  
Health Science Academy  
for students in the 2012-13 school year.

## Why Health Science Professions?

Missoula is a regional hub for medical services in western Montana. The level of care offered in several medical specialties equals that found in larger cities such as Spokane or Portland. There is a commitment across the Missoula community to support the Health Science Academy and other programs that operate under the framework of the Missoula County Public Schools 21st Century Model of Education.

Community partners supporting the Health Science Academy include:

*Area Health Education Center (AHEC)*  
*Community Medical Center and St. Patrick Hospital*  
*Missoula Chamber of Commerce*  
*University of Montana (UM) College of Arts and Sciences*  
*UM College of Education and Human Sciences*  
*UM College of Health Professionals and Biomedical Sciences*  
*UM College of Technology*

## To Learn More

For more general information on career academies, visit [www.ncacinc.com](http://www.ncacinc.com) or [www.edutopia.com](http://www.edutopia.com).

To become a partner in the Health Science Academy, or to volunteer your service as a resource for teachers or youth mentor for students, visit [www.mcps.k12.mt.us](http://www.mcps.k12.mt.us), or call 728-2401.



**21st Century Education.** A STEM career academy is a great example of 21st century learning. It is an academic program that merges real-world experience through occupational coursework and job skills with the rigor of college-prep academics. Career academies have shown to improve student attendance, grades, college enrollment and successful completion of post-secondary degrees.

**Relevance.** Career academies provide an engaging and thematic approach to curriculum and instruction, allowing students to build a greater sense of understanding through shared experiences.

**Skills for all Careers.** The skills and knowledge acquired in a particular career academy are transferable to any career or post-secondary program. Coupling the skills and knowledge with community experiences and exposure, results in a greater return on investment for both the student and community.



## Health Science Academy at Big Sky High School

To learn more:  
Big Sky High School  
3100 South Avenue West  
Missoula, MT 59801  
406-728-2401  
[www.mcps.k12.mt.us](http://www.mcps.k12.mt.us)

# Foundation



## Mission: Provide Relevancy

The Health Science Academy's mission is to provide students with an intellectually challenging and relevant education in a small, supportive environment. Every student enrolled will not only complete high school, but will do so with the knowledge and skills to be successful in a post-secondary educational program.

The academy's teachers and administrators will work with parents and community partners to develop opportunities through which students can become exceptional and well-rounded scholars and citizens. The curriculum will be college-preparatory with a focus on careers in the medical health sciences and in veterinary/animal science. Students will also have an opportunity to earn a Veterinary Technician Certificate.

## Vision: Develop Young Professionals

The academy is supported by a vision that all students will develop into thoughtful, responsible and confident adults who are prepared to excel in both their post-secondary education and career(s). Utilizing local medical centers, health clinics, educational institutions and businesses as integral partners, the Academy will motivate students to continue their education in pursuit of their dreams, and inspire them to work in and contribute to the Missoula community.

# Design

## Structure: Stimulate Creativity and Innovation

The Health Science Academy will be supported through a hands-on, project-based biomedical STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) curriculum provided by Project Lead The Way ([www.pltw.org](http://www.pltw.org)). This curriculum allows students to create, design, build, problem solve and collaborate while applying what they learn in math and science. Students are exposed to various career paths through professionals from local industries who provide internships and work experiences.

Big Sky High School will work with teachers and local health professionals to develop academy courses during the 2011-12 school year. In the 2012-13 school year, 100 freshmen students will enter the academy. By the 2015-16 school year, the academy should have a full enrollment of 400 students in grades 9 through 12. If the number of academy applicants exceeds available spaces, some students will be selected randomly.



Students in the academy at Big Sky High School will be required to maintain certain professional standards regarding behavior, attendance and academics.

## Academy Attributes

A career academy adds a unique twist to traditional curricula. A career academy is:

- A smaller learning community
- Academically rigorous with a focus on college preparation and a career in the health sciences
- Linked closely to the community through experiences, job shadows and internships
- A specialized program that meets or exceeds external standards and college entrance requirements
- A partner with the University system through dual and concurrent enrollment credit opportunities